GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:3797
ANSWERED ON:23.12.2004
PRODUCTION OF BIO-DIESEL FROM JATROPHA
Jagannath Dr. M.

Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the attention of the Government has been drawn to the news items captioned, 'TN Farmers discover new crop of hope', as appeared in the Indian Express dated September 15, 2004; and

(b) if so, the facts of the matter reported therein and the reaction of the Government thereto?

Answer

MINISTER OF PETROLEUM & NATURAL GAS & PANCHAYATI RAJ (SHRI MANI SHANKAR AIYAR)

(a) Yes, sir.

(b) The matter reported is about the extraction of oil from jatropha, mixing it with diesel and using the mixture as auto fuel. It further speaks of extraction of ethanol from sweet sorghum and sugar beet stalks and mixing it with petrol for producing a cheaper eco-friendly fuel.

The Government is aware that bio-diesel is being produced in India in research & development and academic institutions on a pilot scale. Field trials using bio-diesel and diesel blend are being held at present. However, if field trials of bio-diesel blended diesel establish the efficacy of bio-diesel and diesel blend and indicate the possibility of economic pricing of these products, large scale oil seed plantation needs to be undertaken before commercial production of bio-diesel can begin.

Studies have been undertaken to explore the possibility of producing bio-diesel from non-edible oils like Jatropha curcas, Pongomia, etc. The Planning Commission had set up a Committee on Development of Bio-fuel under the chairmanship of Dr. D. N. Tewari, former Member, Planning Commission which recommended launching of a National Mission on Bio-diesel with special focus on plantation of Jatropha curcas. The Ministry of Rural Development has been made the nodal Ministry to implement the National Mission on Bio-diesel and that Ministry has intimated the Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas that a Detailed Project Report (DPR) for the implementation of the Mission on Bio-diesel has been recently prepared by The Energy and Resources Institute (TERI) for the purpose.

Production of ethanol from various sources is already known to the Government. At present, ethanol produced from molasses, a derivative of sugarcane is being used for blending with petrol in notified States and Union Territories.